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Chairman:	Mr. MROZIEWICZ	(Poland)
later:	Mr. ALPMAN (Vice-Chairman)	(Turkey)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

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GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT ITEMS

Ms. MASON (Canada): I wish to join others who have spoken before me, Sir, in extending sincere congratulations on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. Canada and Poland enjoy a tradition of close cooperation in this Committee and we are confident that your guidance will contribute to a productive session. You can be assured of my delegation's full support.

(spoke in French)

Our work at last year's session of the General Assembly had as its backdrop the serious situation that was created when Iraq occupied and attempted to annex Kuwait. Saddam Hussein's expansionist campaign was reversed by the effective action of the Security Council, supported by the majority of Member States, including Canada. But the price was appallingly high in loss of life, damage to the environment and suffering.

Now, in this post-Gulf-War, post-cold-war era, waves of democratization are surging over diverse regions and former adversaries are reaching landmark agreements to reduce stockpiles of nuclear and conventional weapons. Conversely, many long-standing disputes have been exacerbated and long-repressed destructive forces are being unleashed by the process of rapid and fundamental change - change that also creates new instabilities.

In this context, never has the need been greater nor the opportunity more clearly present to ensure that the principles of the United Nations Charter govern the emerging international order. Our task is nothing less than the creation of a new, over-arching security framework based on the rule of international law. Canada fully shares the view, expressed here earlier in

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

the week by Under-Secretatry-General Akashi, that the international community must embrace a multidimensional concept of security. In this regard, let me also recall the opening statement by Brazil, in which Ambassador Sardenberg sketched out the fundamental interrelationship between democracy, development and disarmament.

It is now patently clear that the processes of arms control and disarmament are essential elements in the broader process of building and maintaining international peace and security. Canada is convinced that the First Committee has an important and indeed irreplaceable role to play in advancing arms-control and disarmament objectives. While certain initiatives are most effectively pursued at a bilateral or regional level, other disarmament goals, because their realization depends on the active support of all militarily significant States, require the attention of the international community. It is incumbent upon all of us to redouble our efforts to ensure that this Committee plays its full part in securing progress on disarmament issues. We must strive to ensure that multilateralism in the disarmament sphere fulfils its positive potential.

Iraq's actions during the Gulf War highlighted the urgent need for the international community to step up its efforts to address effectively the proliferation of weapons of mass destrution and to consider ways of discouraging excessive accumulations of conventional arms. Canada is committed to energetically pursuing these issues, both in their horizontal and in their vertical dimensions.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

At the spring session of the Disarmament Commission and in opening statements before this Committee, concrete suggestions have been made concerning how better to utilize multilateral arms-control bodies to promote broader dialogue on proliferation issues. Canada welcomes these proposals and looks forward to studying them further.

In the area of nuclear weapons, Canada commends the leadership and vision demonstrated in the unilateral measures and proposals announced by President Bush last month. We also welcome the equally positive announcements by President Gorbachev in response. These bold steps build on the solid basis of the Stragetic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and clearly demonstrate the commitment of the United States and the Soviet Union seriously to pursue nuclear disarmament. The withdrawal of naval nuclear weapons from ships and submarines is a particularly welcome decision and a step that Canada has long advocated.

The elimination of most categories of land-based tactical nuclear weapons is another extremely positive component of these initiatives and one which will further enhance confidence and security. The reduction in alert status of bombers reflects the tremendous relaxation of tensions between the super-Powers and will further contribute to the lowering of such tensions.

Canada is also pleased to note that the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed to engage in discussions on non-nuclear defences against ballistic missiles and to explore the prospects for moving towards greater reliance on defensive systems. In this context, Canada reiterates its support for the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

In the area of preventing horizontal nuclear proliferation, there have been very positive developments over the last year. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons - the NPT - has been bolstered substantially in recent months by the accessions of Lithuania, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Canada wholeheartedly welcomes these States as parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and looks forward to the accession of other countries that have taken the decision to join, including Angola, China, France and Namibia. Canada also commends Argentina and Brazil for their cooperation, in consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in developing a trilateral safeguards system that has the potential to meet regional security needs while at the same time satisfying world-wide non-proliferation concerns.

However, there remain regions where nuclear proliferation arouses substantial concern. One of these is the Korean peninsula, where the Democratic People's Republic of Korea still refuses to fulfil its obligation as a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to conclude a safeguards agreement with IAEA. Canada looks forward to the early conclusion of such an agreement and to its early ratification and implementation.

Another area of nuclear-proliferation concern is the South Asian region. Canada strongly urges all countries in the region that have not already done so to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons without further delay. If States of the region are not prepared to accede to that Treaty at this time, other measures to reduce tensions based on proliferation and to build confidence and security should be pursued as a matter of priority. The agreement between India and Pakistan, committing each to

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refrain from attacking the other's nuclear facilities in the event of conflict, is a valuable first step upon which other initiatives could be built. The objective of such a process should be to strengthen confidence and security, taking into account, as a matter of primary importance, the need for assurances with respect to nuclear non-proliferation, aimed at assuaging both regional and international concerns.

Under-Secretary-General Akashi highlighted in his statement the increasing emphasis that the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission have been placing on regional disarmament and on confidence- and security-building measures. Many delegations in their opening statements have drawn attention to specific examples of continuing progress in this area, progress which complements efforts at the bilateral and multilateral levels. As my colleague from Finland said, regional disarmament is working.

Canada has long attached great importance to regional confidence- and security-building, and continues to play an active role in this regard in the context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). One of the urgent issues currently facing the CSCE is the resurgence of nationalist, ethnic and religious antagonisms which threaten peace and stability and the consolidation of democracy in Europe. It is for this reason that Canada has made the enhancement of the CSCE machinery for the prevention and resolution of conflicts a key priority. In order to respond to the diverse challenges in Europe, the CSCE must use all of the tools at its disposal, including regular political consultations and its new institutions and mechanisms.

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The Conflict Prevention Centre should be permitted to realize its full potential in assisting the Council of Foreign Ministers in conflict risk reduction. Mediation, conciliation, fact-finding, monitoring and peace-keeping missions should all form part of the package of tools available to Heads of Government or foreign ministers in managing and resolving conflicts. We believe we must explore all avenues that might assist us in building a democratic and peaceful Europe.

(spoke in English)

As a strong supporter of the proposal for an Open Skies regime covering the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok, Canada particularly welcomes the decision reached on 15 October to resume negotiations in early November. Recalling the high priority which the member States of the European Community attached to Open Skies in their statement to this Committee, we urge all participating States to conclude these negotiations successfully before the main follow-up meeting of the CSCE, to be held in Helsinki in 1992. We believe that the transparency resulting from an Open Skies regime would serve to strengthen stability and enhance predictability, and that it would facilitate the arms control and disarmament process in the region covered.

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Canada has also been involved in a recently launched initiative to consider security matters at the Organization of American States. At the General Assembly of that organization in June, two resolutions were adopted by consensus which called for a study on security-related issues. We hope that this study, which is under way, will lend support to international non-proliferation efforts and will consider regional arrangements tailored to the particular needs of the hemisphere that might go beyond what can be agreed globally.

The three United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament have consistently demonstrated the positive contribution they can make in promoting regional dialogue as well as confidence- and security-building measures. The Department for Disarmament Affairs is also to be commended for its sponsorship of timely conferences on topical disarmament issues, such as the very successful Conference held in Kyoto in May 1991.

Another area of the Department's work of strong interest to Canada is the establishment of a consolidated database of published materials - provided by members - on all aspects of verification and compliance, as requested in General Assembly resolution 45/62 F. During this session of the First Committee, I will submit to the Department for Disarmament Affairs and provide to members of this Committee a "Bibliography on Arms Control Verification" prepared by the Canadian Government. This bibliography, which contains more than 1500 titles, includes publications and submissions from Governments and international organizations as well as the research community's literature on the subject. As I said last year, Canada hopes that other members with relevant experience in the field of verification will make similar contributions. The usefulness of the databank will be determined, in large measure, by the support it receives from Member States.

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As a co-sponsor of an annual resolution calling for the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, Canada attaches high priority to the realization of this fundamental objective. We welcome the stimulating discussion on a nuclear-test ban at the Conference on Disarmament during this year's session and the valuable work of the Group of Scientific Experts, including the second technical test concerning the global exchange and analysis of seismic data. We look forward to further consideration of this important issue at the 1992 session of the Conference on Disarmament. Canada also believes that it is time for the United States and the Soviet Union to redouble their efforts to build on the basis of existing bilateral testing limitations. Unilateral steps, while welcome, cannot be a substitute for the negotiation of binding measures leading to the conclusion of an effectively verifiable ban on all nuclear-test explosions.

The nightmare of chemical warfare, which arose in all its horror in the First World War, was long thought to have become a thing of the past. Events of the last decade, and of the past year, have disabused us of this illusion. The negotiations of the Conference on Disarmament's on a chemical weapons convention have made significant headway over the past year. None the less, important differences on crucial issues remain and must be overcome before a global, comprehensive and effectively verifiable chemical weapons ban can be concluded. We believe that these issues can be resolved in 1992. Together with Poland, Canada will introduce a draft resolution to the First Committee that we trust will send a strong message to the Conference on Disarmament to intensify its efforts towards the achievement of this goal.

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Canada is particularly heartened by the outcome of the recently concluded Third Review Conference of the Parties to the biological and toxin weapons Convention. Clearly, the international community was galvanized by real concerns that such weapons could recently have been used. As a result, substantial progress was made at the Review Conference in improving and supplementing agreed confidence-building measures to enhance transparency in what are very complex fields of endeavour. This was a key accomplishment, and one that will now require efforts at the national level by all States parties to the Convention to give the confidence-building measures substantial meaning and effect.

Canada is also pleased that the issue of verification of the biological and toxin weapons Convention will receive a thorough examination in an ad hoc group of governmental experts open to all States parties. Canada intends to participate actively in this important study.

We were similarly satisfied with consideration of article VIII of the Convention, which addresses the relationship of the biological and toxin weapons Convention to the 1925 Geneva Protocol. On the occasion of the Review Conference, Canada announced the withdrawal of its reservation to the 1925 Geneva Protocol with respect to bacteriological methods of warfare and we were pleased that the Final Declaration stressed the importance of such action.

As the representative of Norway pointed out in his statement to the Committee, there will be modest costs associated with implementing the decisions of the Review Conference. Particularly in the light of the admonition from Under-Secretary-General Akashi regarding the very real and serious constraints on the resources of the Department of Disarmament Affairs, we share Norway's hope that a way can be found during the deliberations of the First Committee to satisfactorily resolve this issue.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

In her statement to the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mrs. Barbara McDougall, stressed the urgent need to address the proliferation of conventional weapons - weapons which have inflicted so much suffering and damage in the 125 wars that the world has experienced since 1950. Attention to this issue by the international community is long overdue. The Secretary-General in his 1991 report on the work of the United Nations again expressed his:

> "grave concern over the problem of excessive and destabilizing transfers of conventional armaments". (A/46/1, p. 12).

Canada believes that it is necessary to begin a process aimed at discouraging and ultimately preventing excessive build-ups of conventional weapons. This is an area where this Committee can make a tangible and valuable contribution.

The Canadian delegation will be working hard with other delegations to secure a resolution that establishes an international arms transfer register. We believe it is of the utmost importance to build on the current political momentum in favour of a register, and on the recommendation of the Group of Governmental Experts that it be established as soon as possible. As the Experts made clear in their excellent consensus report on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms, East-West experience with the benefits of enhanced transparency in building confidence, in reducing tensions and ultimately in expanding the scope for negotiated agreements, has been overwhelmingly positive. The Gulf War demonstrated the urgent need to extend transparency to the hitherto untouched field of conventional arms acquisition, to extend it on a global basis and to extend it immediately.

(Ms. Mason, Canada)

To fulfil its confidence-building potential, the register must be effective. It must be as broadly supportive as possible. It must include both suppliers and recipients. It must present an accurate picture of arms accumulation and it must be non-discriminatory to those who rely on arms imports to supply their defence needs. This is why Canada considers it essential that domestic arms procurement and arms holdings be reported to the register at an early stage.

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The provision of data to the register will in itself be valuable, as it will allow Member States to demonstrate the non-destablizing character of their activities. But confidence-building is not a fixed point: it is a process, and to encourage maximum development of that process we believe the resolution should specify a forum wherein Member States could annually review the operation of the register and consult about the information provided to it. An annual meeting on the margins of the First Committee, for example, might serve as an appropriate forum for this purpose. This will help to ensure that the register remains effective and adapts to political circumstances. Consultation will enable Member States to develop clearer understandings of one another's views on such matters as how security is affected by arms acquisition. It may also facilitate improvement of national control mechanisms and help to prevent illicit arms trade.

Canada believes it is important to confine the register to conventional arms. This is not a question of being discriminatory. As Ambassador Donawaki of Japan noted in his opening statement, elaborate international mechanisms already exist, or are under negotiation, for constraining the acquisition of other types of weapons. In the case of weapons of mass destruction, our aim is not simply to promote transparency and to discourage an excess of accumulation. Our goal is the elimination of those weapons altogether.

In short, our first task is to foster a climate conducive to voluntary restraint and more responsible behaviour on the part of suppliers and recipients alike. Canada firmly believes that an international arms transfer register can make a significant contribution to this end. But over the longer term - and again I quote the Secretary-General - our goal must clearly be to:

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"seek to develop fair criteria for multilateral control of arms transfers while at the same time meeting the legitimate security needs of States". (A/46/1, p. 12)

The construction of an enduring system of cooperative security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter cannot be accomplished solely on a bilateral or a regional basis. We must all do our part. This Committee provides the opportunity for every United Nations Member State to play a concrete role in advancing specific disarmament objectives and in helping to shape the broader principles of international security. Virtually every one of the delegations that has spoken before me has stressed that the prospects for progress on the range of issues before us has never been better. In another context, Canada's Foreign Minister stated that there simply is no viable alternative to practical, future-oriented results. Let us resolve to engage in a constructive, productive dialogue to that end.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): Before I turn to the subject-matter of my statement, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this important Committee. My delegation looks forward to working under your able guidance and will do its utmost to contribute to the successful outcome of our endeavours.

The year 1991 has been historic in terms of far-reaching initiatives and agreements in the field of disarmament. Respect and willingness to cooperate are replacing old fears and suspicions.

Last July, in signing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, the United States and the Soviet Union took a significant step towards reducing the threat of nuclear war by agreeing to reduce considerably their arsenals of strategic arms. Since the opening of this session of the General Assembly,

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the world has also witnessed the historic declarations by the two nations of their intention to withdraw and destroy whole categories of nuclear weapons.

The President of the United States and the President of the Soviet Union have shown considerable and admirable political courage. For this, they both deserve our sincere respect and gratitude.

The improved relationship between the two major political and military Powers is indeed very positive. There are, however, certain issues which can be solved only in the global context. The improved American-Soviet relationship will be conducive to agreements, but not enough to bridge the many differences that exist in this wider setting. For the future security of all nations and the prospects of peaceful developments in the whole world it is essential that multilateral solutions also be found. I am thinking of issues such as nuclear proliferation, chemical and biological weapons, and international arms transfers.

The earlier conflict between East and West must not be followed by a political rift between North and South. It is our common responsibility to seek to avoid new conflicts now, when we share the hope of an era of peace and cooperation.

Over the last few decades, several United Nations studies have pointed to the enormous and onerous costs associated with armaments. This has been the case for both nuclear weapons and conventional armaments in all parts of the world. The weapons have become increasingly sophisticated and even more costly and have greater destructive power. These economic resources should be made available for human development and mutual trust.

Once again a war - the war in the Gulf - has given momentum to a renewed and worldwide commitment to peace, disarmament and non-proliferation. During

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the Gulf War, the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated for the first time since the Second World War against a brutal aggressor.

Following the Gulf War, a number of far-reaching initiatives in the field of disarmament have been launched. The five permanent members of the Security Council and the Group of 7 nations have put forward substantial proposals to prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons.

In 1991, Sweden has, like many other nations, tried to contribute to the new momentum in disarmament. In July, in the Conference on Disarmament, Sweden presented a draft comprehensive test-ban treaty, and in the ongoing negotiations on a convention on chemical weapons several proposals were put forward with a view to promoting a rapid conclusion. In the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on biological weapons, Sweden submitted concrete proposals, notably on confidence-building measures and verification. in the Disarmament Commission as well as in the Conference on Disarmament, Sweden has proposed measures with a view to increasing transparency and restraint as regards the transfer of conventional weapons.

In the regional context, Sweden is wholeheartedly participating in the building of a new Europe, a Europe that has rid itself of the nightmare of totalitarianism and the cold war. At the historic summit Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) held less than a year ago, all the participating States undertook to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of their nations.

The point of departure for all endeavours within the CSCE must be that security is indivisible. Consequently, the Council of Ministers meeting in

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Berlin this summer decided on new negotiations on disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures comprising all CSCE participating States.

This followed last year's signing of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document 1990 of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-building Measures. In 1991 we have witnessed progress under both these agreements, and we expect them to form a basis for the negotiations to come.

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The CSCE process has continued to contribute to the high aims of the Charter of Paris. The establishment of a crisis mechanism has enabled the CSCE to act without delay in urgent situations. We welcome the decision, taken at the recently concluded CSCE meeting in Moscow on the Human Dimension, which makes it possible to send rapporteurs to CSCE countries where there is a risk of violations of human rights.

But Europe has not become immune to armed conflicts, as is tragically and painfully clear from what we have witnessed over recent weeks. Sweden supports and participates in the efforts to achieve lasting peace in Yugoslavia that are being made through the CSCE and the European Community.

Over the last 40 years the world has witnessed a continuous build-up of nuclear weapons. Their combined destructive capacity increased to a point that has challenged human imagination. Nuclear weapons were deployed in ever widening circles on land, in the air and at sea. This last year that trend has been broken. For the first time in the post-war period a major reduction in strategic nuclear weapons has been agreed. Sweden welcomes the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) signed this summer by the United States and the Soviet Union. It constitutes a turning-point in world disarmament efforts, a significant step on the road to the ultimate goal: a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Further steps have followed. The new atmosphere in international relations has given impetus to yet another important move concerning both strategic and substrategic nuclear weapons. Sweden considers the unilateral measures announced by the President of the United States on 27 September as yet another breakthrough in disarmament affairs. The measures affect a large number of weapons and weapons systems that can be considered especially dangerous and destabilizing.

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This concerns not least the naval weapons systems covered in the statement by President Bush. The decision announced by the United States implies the withdrawal from surface vessels and submarines of substrategic naval weapons. This is a great step forward in naval disarmament. Subsequent declarations by United States officials further indicate that the policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence or absence of such weapons aboard ships has been abandoned for these weapons systems. That is a welcome widening of the application of transparency in naval nuclear matters.

The announcement by the United States was reciprocated a few days later by the Soviet Union, when President Gorbachev proposed further steps to be taken concerning strategic weapons. These measures by both the leading nuclear Powers should be warmly welcomed, not least as a recognition on their part of the special responsibility they bear in the field of nuclear disarmament. Sweden urges them to continue along the path chosen, and other nuclear-weapon States to follow suit. We hope that not only the year 1991 but also years to come will be characterized as historic in the field of nuclear disarmament.

The Gulf crisis has given new momentum to efforts to come to grips with the question of arms transfers and has clearly demonstrated the urgent need to prevent further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Sweden is actively taking part in international efforts to strengthen existing non-proliferation regimes and to establish new ways of preventing further proliferation. On a national level, Sweden has introduced new legislation on exports of missile technology and of components for biological and chemical weapons. The already existing nuclear legislation is being revised. These

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measures have been taken in order to contribute to international non-proliferation efforts. They will not in any way affect peaceful uses of the technologies concerned and will not replace efforts to achieve a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons.

The momentous changes in world politics, the end of the cold war, the actual reductions of nuclear weapons and the prospects for further significant cuts in the nuclear-weapon arsenals suggest that substantial progress can now be made towards banning all nuclear tests.

Last July at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva Sweden introduced a draft comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. Sweden hopes that all nuclear-weapon States, especially after the recent announcements by President Bush and President Gorbachev, will now agree on the need for negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty and take appropriate action in the Conference on Disarmament. In this context Sweden welcomes the unilateral one-year moratorium introduced by the Soviet Union.

Sweden also welcomes the decisions of France and China to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Thus, all five nuclear-weapon States will soon be Parties to the Treaty, which is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. Sweden notes with great satisfaction that Lithuania has very recently acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and that Estonia and Latvia have declared their intention to do so. Sweden further welcomes the accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty of South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The prestige and authority of the Non-Proliferation Treaty have been further strengthened by these developments.

Sweden urges all States which have not acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty - in particular those States which have developed significant nuclear

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activities - to become Parties to this Treaty. The almost universal adherence with more than 140 States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, bears witness to the fact that nuclear non-proliferation is not a North-South issue but a concern for all mankind.

Under the Non-Proliferation Treaty all non-nuclear-weapon States Parties shall conclude safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We note with regret that many States Parties to the Treaty in different parts of the world have not done so. The majority of these States have no significant nuclear activities. If, however, a State Party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty develops a significant nuclear activity, it is imperative for such a State immediately to conclude, ratify and implement a safeguards agreement with the IAEA. This matter should be given the highest priority by all concerned.

The inspections in Iraq by the IAEA and the United Nations Special Commission established pursuant to Security Council resolution 687 (1991) have convinced us of the need further to strengthen the safeguards system of the IAEA. In order to maintain the credibility of IAEA safeguards, it is imperative to re-examine the implementation of the safeguards agreements and the national regulations of trade in this field. The basis for a more rigorous regime must be a willingness to allow full transparency for all peaceful nuclear activities by all States.

The nuclear cooperation agreement between Argentina and Brazil is an important contribution to nuclear non-proliferation. My delegation hopes that their negotiations with the International Atomic Energy Agency on comprehensive safeguards will reach a speedy conclusion. Regional agreements on zones free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction may be an effective way to a global elimination of these weapons.

(Mr. Hyltenius, Sweden)

After many years of negotiations, the work on the chemical weapons convention now seems to have entered its final phase. Important progress towards the completion of the convention has been made in recent months. My Government shares the hope of other States that the work on a global, comprehensive and verifiable chemical weapons convention will be finalized in the coming year and will make every effort to contribute to its speedy conclusion.

Sweden welcomes the 13 May initiative by President Bush whereby an important hurdle in the negotiations has been removed. Article I, the backbone of the convention, is now comprehensive in scope through the inclusion of a provision on the total prohibition of the use of chemical weapons.

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The problem of verification is the most difficult and important issue remaining in the negotiations. Recent events have clearly demonstrated the need for a strong and effective verification regime. Verification under the convention must be effective without being unnecessarily intrusive. It must give the States parties sufficient confidence that the convention is being complied with and that it deters potential violations, but it must also make it possible for the States parties to protect legitimate national security as well as commercial interests. It is essential to make the convention non-discriminatory in character and attractive in content in order that it may achieve universal adherence.

Important work on the convention still remains to be done. The task ahead is not an entirely easy one. With the end of the negotiations now in sight, and taking into account the existing encouraging momentum, my Government urges all parties concerned to spare no effort to address the remaining outstanding issues with a view to finalizing the convention on chemical weapons in 1992.

The Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction adopted a Final Declaration containing important elements designed to strengthen the Convention.

The Convention is the first genuine disarmament Treaty in its field, complementing and reaching far beyond the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The Gulf War brought the Convention into focus and once again reminded us of the vital importance of having an effective and strong regime against such abominable arms. The world must be kept free from biological weapons. Sweden urges all States not yet parties to the Convention to adhere to it as soon as possible.

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Means of verification and control in the context of the Convention must be established. One of the most important goals at the Review Conference was to create stronger and more effective machinery for consultation. A group will be set up to identify and examine possible verification measures from a technological and scientific point of view. The explicit instruction to the Group to complete its work as rapidly as possible, and preferably before the end of 1993, is promising.

My Government welcomes the declarations made by some States parties to withdraw their reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and thereby confirm their intention never, under any circumstances, to make use of biological weapons. Sweden urges all States still reserving the right to retaliate with biological weapons to withdraw those reservations, making it possible finally to exclude the possibility that biological weapons may be used in the future.

Non-proliferation is also essential with regard to conventional weapons. The scope is broad and covers such diverse areas as heavy weapons systems, including tanks and artillery, and excessively injurious weapons, including anti-personnel laser weapons.

There is a need for joint action on the part of the world community and of individual States to promote, enact and enforce legal instruments to control and monitor arms imports and exports effectively. Control systems and increased transparency will serve as important means for building confidence, on both a regional and a global level.

Institutes such as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) provide the world community with estimates of arms transfers. In parallel to this research, we also need data actually provided by Governments.*

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* Mr. Alpman (Turkey), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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Sweden welcomes the United Nations study on ways and means of promoting transparency in international transfers of conventional arms. The study is indeed timely. We fully endorse the recommendation made in the study for the setting up of a universal and non-discriminatory United Nations register on conventional weapons. Such a proposal has been advocated by numerous countries, including my own. Sweden favours the suggestion that a United Nations register should initially cover the categories specified in the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe, supplemented by warships and surface-to-surface missiles. We also find it appropriate that the register should cover quantities of weapons actually delivered.

At a later stage, the world community should seek to strengthen the system of confidence-building further by extending the scope of the register. The world community should also seek to establish norms for the trade in conventional weapons.

The United Nations study on transfers of conventional weapons highlights illicit trade as disturbing and dangerous. Sweden fully agrees with and supports the proposal in the study that action should be taken against such trade by combating corruption, maintaining effective control over boundaries of States and strengthening, where appropriate, national legislation.

Before I conclude the issue of conventional weapons, I should like to refer to the category of excessively injurious weapons. Later this year, at the Red Cross Conference to be held in Budapest, Sweden will actively seek a consensus on a resolution on the prohibition of anti-personnel laser weapons that have the effect of permanently blinding human beings. We will also pursue the issue of the prohibition of attacks on nuclear facilities.

Last summer, the United Nations study on the charting of potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to

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protect the environment was completed. The study was prompted by the twofold recognition: the need to mobilize adequate resources for effectively meeting the challenge of environmental protection and the potential of the military sector worldwide to assist the civilian world community in achieving this objective.

The report recommends global action such as sharing, through the United Nations, environmental data obtained through the use of military satellites and other information-gathering systems. The United Nations and its Member States are invited to set up environmental relief teams which can respond to requests by nations for assistance in environmental emergencies. Nations are also invited to make inventories of environmental needs and military-related resources applicable to environmental purposes and to report thereon to the United Nations. They are further requested to consider what military resources they may place at the disposal of the United Nations for environmental disasters and emergencies. This Committee will have an opportunity later to discuss this issue.

The new era of understanding gives us reason to believe in cooperation and real disarmament. It is our firm hope that this new spirit of trust will materialize in concrete agreements on a comprehensive test-ban Treaty, on a convention on chemical weapons, on improved verification of biological weapons, and on increased transparency and restraint as regards international arms transfers.

Mr. BAEV (Bulgaria): Allow me to begin my statement by congratulating Mr. Mroziewicz, the representative of friendly Poland, on his election to the chairmanship of this important Committee and to pledge the full support and cooperation of the Bulgarian delegation in the fulfilment of his duties in presiding over our work.

(Mr. Baev, Bulgaria)

I feel bound to mention also with due respect the efficient work of his predecessor, Ambassador Rana of Nepal. My congratulations and best wishes for fruitful work go also to the other elected officers of the Committee. I avail myself of this opportunity to express our deep appreciation of the tireless efforts of Mr. Yasushi Akashi, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, in pursuit of the cause of disarmament and international security, and acknowledge with appreciation his important statement before the Committee.

(Mr. Baev, Bulgaria)

I would also like to pay a tribute to that eminent figure in disarmament, Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles, who is no longer among us, but whose lifetime contribution to the pursuit of the lofty goals of disarmament will not be forgotten.

The First Committee is convening this year in an important period for arms control, disarmament and international security. We are witnessing unprecedented, swift and dramatic changes in international affairs, changes that clear the way for promising cooperative security arrangements. The overall political changes in Europe have, in effect, helped mankind to get rid of a most dangerous source of international tension. The irreversibility of the democratic processes has been best illustrated recently by the abortive coup in the Soviet Union. Such events will no doubt have a positive impact on the prospects for genuine arms control and disarmament. At the same time, we cannot afford to ignore the uncertainties and instabilities that are always present in times of profound political reform.

The Gulf war experience has brought about a new spirit of international cooperation aimed at promoting greater stability in the whole world. This is a time of enormous opportunities for the United Nations as a universal Organization with a central role to play in reviving and building upon the principles of the international system of collective security.

Arms control, on the global and regional levels, is a fundamental element of the emerging new international order of stable peace, security and cooperation. In this sense, the unprecedented and valuable work of the United Nations Special Commission and of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in fulfilment of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), ordering the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, provides ample evidence of

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the vital role the United Nations can play in the implementation of arms control and disarmament arrangements. We also unconditionally support and actively strive for the implementation of Security Council resolution 713 (1991) on the crisis in Yugoslavia as another demonstration of United Nations involvement in the international efforts towards a peaceful and democratic settlement of the ongoing conflict.

The unity of action displayed recently by the five permanent members of the Security Council is a cornerstone for maintaining international peace, security and stability. In view of the positive results of the active involvement of the United Nations in dealing with various crisis situations, we hope that this unanimity of the five will extend also to arms control and disarmament, providing a fresh impetus in pursuit of a multilateral approach in this field. In this context, we welcome the first results of the current process of harmonization of the export policies of States covering dual-purpose technologies and conventional arms transfers.

Only a couple of weeks ago, we witnessed the breakthrough initiative announced by President George Bush, on deep unilateral cuts in the United States nuclear arsenal. In a special declaration, President Zhelyu Zhelev of Bulgaria resolutely supported this initiative as

> "a significant step forward to the nuclear-free world that has been the dream of mankind for decades".

We also welcome the prompt and matching response by President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union. We are confident that such bold unilateral steps, complementing the START Treaty and the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles - the INF Treaty - will enhance

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global, as well as regional, security and stability at substantially lower levels of armaments.

Democratic Bulgaria has begun a process of reassassment of its security options emerging in the new political environment in Europe. Our pragmatic quest to guaranteee national security goes hand in hand with a concerted drive to strengthen peace and stability on the regional and global levels. The ongoing revision of my country's disarmament position - one that had been adopted in a different security situation - has been inspired by a more realistic attitude and in full view of our security interests as seen in their specific geographic context.

Arms control and disarmament in all their aspects remain pillars of international security and stability. An increasingly broader consensus is taking shape in the international community on putting into practice a future-oriented philosophy in this field, based on new world realities and the balance of interests of all parties concerned and the international community as a whole. In order to be irreversible, the ongoing arms control and disarmament process should rest on fundamental principles of universal validity. Confidence-building, as a result of greater openness and predictability in all security-related activities of States, has an important role to play in this regard.

Bulgaria is a small country with limited defence capabilities, situated in the Balkans, a region where certain alarming developments of late are causing our justified concern and apprehension. My country's national interests require a strengthening of the role of non-military factors of security and stability. On the European and subregional scales, this means, inter alia, devoting more attention to confidence-building, timely collective

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action in conflict prevention and elimination of the existing military imbalances and asymmetries, particularly in subregions charged with ethnic and national tension and instability.

Certain events in recent years have highlighted the need to strengthen by all available means the control of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery missiles and to prevent the excessive build-up by individual States of conventional arsenals in excess of their legitimate needs of self-defence.

Bulgaria supports such non-proliferation initiatives and is taking steps to strengthen its national control over trade involving dual-use materials, equipment and technologies in conformity with international standards. We also support the proposals to establish within the United Nations a universal and non-discriminatory register of conventional arms transfers. Increased openness and transparency in this regard would help build confidence and identify cases of unwarranted build-up of weapons, thus giving an early warning to the international community of the emergence of destabilizing force imbalances, particularly in areas of tension or conflict. In much the same light we view the prospect of the elaboration and universal acceptance of a corresponding code of conduct by States in this field. Non-proliferation and restraint in transfers and production of weaponry are the keys to stability and security for all.

In the same vein, Bulgaria welcomes the intention, announced by France and China, to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and the accession to this Treaty of Lithuania, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We see in this an important indication

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of the renewed efforts to ensure the viability of the Treaty after 1995. The extension of the NPT Parties to include all five nuclear-weapon States creates radically new opportunities for asserting the objectives of non-proliferation and for providing adequate security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States Parties to the Treaty.

As a country that does not develop, manufacture or possess chemical weapons and has no foreign stocks of such weapons in its territory, Bulgaria expects to see, in the year 1992, the signing of the convention on their global ban and elimination. After so many years full of hope but also frustration, we are now looking forward with confidence and optimism to the successful conclusion of the negotiations. The new approach taken by the militarily most important States on key aspects of the total and verifiable ban on chemical weapons and on their ultimate destruction, and the constructive spirit and concrete results achieved in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Conference on Disarmament, wholly justify such expectations on our part.

We are aware of the outstanding issues, some of which are extremely important for the applicability of the future convention, inter alia, challenge inspection, verification in the chemical industry and decision-making by the Executive Council.

(Mr. Baev, Bulgaria)

The emerging broad support for the concept of phased and controllable access to challenge sites is bringing the chemical disarmament negotiations closer to a consensus. We also welcome the general consent to routine verification of all operable facilities and the effective exemption from inspection of chemical industry facilities presenting no significant threat to the objectives of the chemical weapons convention. It is only natural that such verification should in no way infringe upon the legitimate interests of States parties and should safeguard confidential information.

In our view, the members of the Executive Council should be elected for a two-year period on the principle of equitable geographical distribution and approximately equal levels of development of chemical industries. The decision-making procedure should have two levels: qualified majority for substantive issues and simple majority for all others.

The future chemical weapons convention will be unique in its scope and mode of implementation. Thus, it is of paramount importance that its provisions should contain in themselves the prerequisites for early achievement of universality. By including provisions on protection and assistance the convention would enhance the security of States parties. By regulating economic and technological cooperation in this field it would stimulate the development of the chemical industry in the common interest of mankind.

Bulgaria reiterates its preparedness to be among the first States parties to the convention and is now in the process of carrying out the necessary institutional and legislative preparations in order to meet its obligations thereunder. In this context, I am pleased to inform you that on 13 September this year the Bulgarian parliament passed an act by virtue of which Bulgaria

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withdrew the reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol it expressed in 1934, when it ratified it.

Still on the subject of weapons of mass destruction, Bulgaria reiterates its conviction that the strengthening of, and universal adherence to the 1972 biological and toxin weapons Convention is of paramount importance for international peace and security. My country therefore welcomes with appreciation the successful conclusion of the Third Review Conference of the biological weapons Convention and the important decisions taken in the field of confidence-building and verification measures aimed at improving the effectiveness and implementation of the Convention and reducing the risk biological weapon proliferation.

The regional approach to arms control and disarmament is very important, as it is capable of taking into due consideration the specific characteristics of each region and the interests of all parties involved. Such regional measures constitute a most effective means of strengthening the security of individual States and regions and of furthering the process of global disarmament.

The importance of the ongoing transformation in political and military structures in Europe cannot be overstated. We believe that military deterrence will gradually surrender its role as a key factor in maintaining peace and stability to political factors and measures aimed at restructuring and reducing armed forces and armaments. In this context, I should like to mention the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe as a significant achievement. The Bulgarian parliament recently ratified this Treaty, and also the agreement on regional ceilings for armaments, signed in Budapest on 3 November 1990.

The entry into force and implementation of the Treaty on Conventional

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Armed Forces in Europe would make it possible to proceed without further delay to the next stage of the European disarmament process, aimed at establishing defensive sufficiency throughout the continent and redressing the remaining subregional force imbalances.

Following the dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, Bulgaria is following new approaches in shaping its security policies. It can now aspire to full membership in existing and prospective European security structures and institutions. This reintegration process will undoubtedly take time. It may often involve a measure of controversy. In the present period of transition, a top priority in Bulgaria's foreign policy is the need to find reliable guarantees for its national security in the specific regional environment of the Balkans.

In this respect, we rely greatly on the European peacemaking, peace-keeping and stability-enhancing institutions, backed, when necessary, by the authority and relevant mechanisms of the United Nations. Bulgaria's wide-ranging political and security cooperation within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe structures, as well as with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Western European Union, is a factor of vital importance for our national security.

Bilateral cooperation in all fields is another basic means of strengthening national as well as regional and global security. Bulgaria is now in the process of preparing and signing bilateral treaties for cooperation in various spheres with a number of European states. Such treaties have already been signed with Germany and Greece; intensive consultations are in progress with the Governments of other countries. My country expects that its legitimate security interests will be correctly understood, duly recognized and assisted by our partners on the common road to a united and free Europe.

(Mr. Baev, Bulgaria)

The national security of Bulgaria is directly related to the development of good-neighbourly relations with all Balkan States, relations that should provide for greater openness and predictability in the military sphere. We are striving to get rid, once and for all, of the legacy of the cold war, which has been a source of instability and potential threat to the peoples of the Balkan subregion. In this spirit we are ready to consider any mutually acceptable proposals aimed at enhancing security and stabilizing the military balance in the Balkans.

In addressing the other global aspects of arms control and disarmament, I should like to state that the standardized United Nations system for reporting the military expenditures of Member States has in no way lost its prominence. In the new situation, the international community should be prepared to make further steps towards greater transparency, confidence and stability. Bulgaria for its part is willing to contribute further to these positive processes.

The general trend towards reducing the role of military factors per se in international politics is likely to release resources needed for social, economic and environmental development. For a number of countries, including my own, this means putting military production facilities, consequent on the process of conversion, to civil use. Bulgaria is making serious steps to convert entire sectors of its military industry in the hope that this will help solve some of Bulgaria's acute economic problems.

The First Committee could play an even more effective role in the process of disarmament, especially if the present trend towards rationalizing its functioning continues. In the future, my delegation will continue to play its part in these efforts through specific actions guided by a sense of pragmatism and constructive cooperation.

(Mr. Baev, Bulgaria)

In this context, we deem it necessary to revise our sponsoring of resolutions in which we have played a relatively active role in the past. My delegation fails to see the rationale, for example, in continuing to introduce or sponsor resolutions containing negative security assurances of the kind that have been adopted by the General Assembly for more than 10 years without any tangible effect. A more realistic approach may be needed and we wish to join others in the quest for it.

We do not make light of our own security issues, or of those of other non-nuclear-weapon States for that matter. On the contrary, we wish to help channel those efforts in a more promising and realistic direction, one that would help overcome the present deadlock. We see prospects for so doing mainly within the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, where we intend to further our efforts in the quest for early progress.

The delegation of Bulgaria also hopes that, in order to make progress on a number of important items before this Committee, the adoption of certain controversial resolutions will be avoided.

Bulgaria's view of the functioning of the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission are similar. We support all efforts towards further rationalizing the work of these basic multilateral organs in the field of arms control and disarmament.

The First Committee has a remarkable opportunity to take advantage of all the positive changes taking place in the international arena and to stimulate and support them. The Bulgarian delegation is ready to play its part in making this year's session of the Committee a highly successful and productive one, and to cooperate with other members in strengthening and broadening the emerging consensus in various important aspects of our work.

Mr. LUNA (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to reserve for an occasion in the near future a well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Alfonso Garcia Robles. At this time let me simply say that his recent sudden demise has left a huge vacuum because we shall no longer have the benefit of his enormous talent.

During this especially encouraging period, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. In view of the need to reformulate the concepts and practices which have guided our work in recent years, we must all be especially creative since we will be facing unprecedented challenges in the area of disarmament.

The task ahead is difficult since it calls into question deep-rooted realities and ideas, such as the rigidity of the international power structure, or the so-called deterrent nature of the balance of terror. These ideas had given the impression of predetermined inevitability. Historic opportunities are by definition fleeting and the present fluidity of international relations has given us an especially golden opportunity which should not be missed.

The delegation of Peru is prepared to participate actively in this new stage of our work and we are sure that under your leadership, Mr. Chairman, the First Committee will achieve the results for which we all hope.

We should also like to extend the congratulations of our delegation to the other officers of the Committee and to say that we are deeply grateful to the Secretariat for all the work it has done.

Over the past few decades the international community, in the context of a sharp ideological conflict and an ongoing threat of military confrontation with unimaginable consequences, was nevertheless able to create important

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legal instruments in the area of disarmament and arms limitation. These instruments in themselves constituted restraining walls, fragile to be sure, but with the distinct probability of their being strengthened in the face of the unbridled increase in nuclear weapons.

Given the present international situation, a significant number of States parties to the partial nuclear-test-ban Treaty feel that the time has come for its amendment and for the complete elimination of these tests, which have become anachronistic in the present circumstances. The negotiations and consultations arising from the Amendment Conference, aimed at its resumption at the appropriate time, should continue to receive the full support of the States parties to the Treaty. In this respect, we reiterate our complete confidence in the work of the Chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Ali Alatas.

The First Committee could supplement these efforts if, during the present session, it recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee of the Disarmament Conference on a Nuclear Test Ban receive a negotiating mandate leading to a complete ban of these tests.

With reference to the non-proliferation treaty (NPT), my Government believes that this must be universalized and extended indefinitely as a result of the 1995 Conference.

In this respect, we welcome the accession to the NPT of Mozambique, Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and South Africa and the announcement that France and China will be acceding to the Treaty in the near future.

Notwithstanding, before we reach our goal of universalizing and extending indefinitely the NPT, certain obstacles have to be overcome. First, we need the firm commitment of the nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty to

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avoid at all costs the vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons. This would also deflect the criticisms that the Treaty is discriminatory in nature. Secondly, all obligations under the Treaty must be duly complied with, in particular those concerning the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes to the non-nuclear-weapon States. Also, there must be an efficient verification system so as to avoid a repetition of the recent events in the Persian Gulf.

As regards the Convention banning bacteriological weapons, we welcome the progress that was made at the Third Review Conference. Likewise, we consider that the General Assembly should grant a broad mandate to the Secretary-General to promote the total fulfilment of the commitments assumed by States parties to the Final Declaration of the Conference, in particular, those relating to international cooperation for peaceful purposes in this field.

At the same time, my delegation is pleased with the important progress that has been made in the framework of the Disarmament Conference on the future Treaty banning chemical weapons.

We should also like to reaffirm the full validity of the Tlatelolco Treaty to which we urge the countries in the region to accede as soon as possible. We also urge the nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify its Additional Protocol I.

My Government is very concerned about the present state of negotiations within the Disarmament Conference.

We have before us the report of that body and we can only appeal to countries which have participated in its work as full members to join forces

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so that the Disarmament Conference can fully discharge its mandate as the allegedly sole international negotiating body in this area.

Although we have welcomed the progress made with respect to the chemical weapons Convention, such is not the case with respect to the Conference's other agenda items. For example, there are ad hoc committees with no mandate whatsoever. Their work seems to be merely procedural in nature and they have achieved no substantive results in such sensitive areas as disarmament and international security.

The efforts made to encourage nuclear disarmament must be supplemented with specific measures to limit conventional weapons, whose development and proliferation have had a more direct impact on the developing countries.

Expenditure on conventional weapons and armed forces represent approximately 80 per cent of world-wide military expenditure. A large percentage of the national budgets of all countries is devoted to the production or acquisition of conventional arms. Existing conflicts are sustained to a huge extent by these types of weapons. We are also faced with a new generation of highly destructive conventional weapons which could produce a new arms race and a series of regional imbalances.

Paradoxically, the post-cold-war period has highlighted the persistence of certain regional conflicts and the active presence of nationalist claims which we thought had been settled. Regrettably, these facts only serve to encourage the transfer and production of conventional weapons and threaten security within a qualitatively new international context. Hence, we need to rethink our approach to the problem of international security and the adoption of concrete measures.

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

One of the crucial items facing the present session is the international transfer of weapons. Because of its great importance, the Organization must approach this subject globally and tackle all its aspects.

(Mr. Luna, Peru)

The international transfer of arms is a complex phenomenon. The most important aspects of the question were reflected in the resolution (43/75 I) on the subject that was adopted in December 1988, in which we emphasized the need to consider the potential effects of this item in its relationship to regional conflicts and threats to international peace and security, as well as its negative effects on the process of the social and economic development of all peoples and on the increasing illicit and covert arms trafficking. Although arms transfers represent a small part of global military expenditures, their potential political, economic and social impact transcends the quantitative aspects of the current trade.

The illicit and covert traffic in arms has a highly destabilizing effect on many countries. In the case of Peru and many other countries of Latin America, drug trafficking and terrorism promote a growing trade in illegal weapons - trade that States are finding ever harder to control. We should stress that such activities are threatening the very existence of democratic regimes in the area, established at the cost of major efforts and sacrifices by their peoples.

Furthermore, the excessive and uncontrolled production of weapons also leads to illicit trafficking. To the argument that this production cannot be controlled because that would violate the principles of the market economy, the reply is that inaction in the face of illicit trafficking would lead to an unprecedented intensification of that traffic, given the persistent international problems - a source of potential conflict. Thus, the producing States have an obligation to introduce controls, or establish more effective ones, over the transfer to other countries of what they have produced.

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In this context, the establishment of a United Nations arms-transfer register would be the first step in a global strategy aimed at significantly reducing these transfers, and would constitute an important confidence-building measure.

At the same time, my delegation believes that the register should not be limited to the actual transfer of weapons, but should also include production and existing arsenals. That is why we feel it would be appropriate to establish simultaneously a group of experts to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations in ensuring that the register met the objectives of all countries, in conformity with the Organization's universal and non-discriminatory role. This group of experts should bear in mind the irrevocable principle of the self-defence of States. In this connection, my delegation believes that the work done by the group of experts on international arms transfers deserves the appreciation of all delegations here.

In Peru's foreign policy special importance is given to the regional disarmament processes. We are convinced that this approach is a central element in the achievement of general and complete disarmament. We also believe that it offers concrete opportunities for reaching specific agreements on the reduction of weapons that would make it possible to implement plans for comprehensive regional security.

In that respect, in conformity with its traditional position, Peru urges the discussion in various regional forums of topics related to particular aspects of this subject, such as arms transfers, conventional disarmament on the regional level, and ways and means of promoting confidence, security and development, with a view to ensuring that these topics receive the political support necessary to the achievement of concrete bilateral and multilateral

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negotiations for regional disarmament. In this context, my delegation believes it necessary to stress that the security of the Latin American region is closely related to the processes of economic and social development. Consequently, social, economic, humanitarian and environmental aspects should be considered together with military questions, in the appropriate framework for implementing concrete schemes of comprehensive regional security.

That is why the President of Peru, Alberto Fujimori, during the First Ibero-American Conference, held in Guadalajara, Mexico, in July 1991, proposed a policy of regional disarmament based on renunciation of the production and use of weapons of mass destruction, arms reduction, and utilization of the resources made available thereby to promote regional development. This proposal is part of a rehabilitated concept of security, aimed at maintaining the stability of Governments legitimately established despite threats such as drug trafficking and terrorism, which have acquired regional and global dimensions.

In this context, Peru has invited the countries of the Rio Group to a special meeting in Lima in 1992, where agreement will be reached on the joint elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. In this context, my country welcomes the ratification of the Mendoza Declaration for the complete prohibition of biological and chemical weapons. This represents real progress and demonstrates the peace-loving nature of our region.

The Government of Peru believes that the United Nations has a fundamental role in the area of disarmament. In this respect, joint efforts by Member States would make it possible to reorganize the work of the Disarmament Commission in a promising way. The Organization's activities in disseminating

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information through the World Disarmament Campaign, despite the scarcity of resources, deserve our praise. The United Nations Regional Centres for disarmament, peace and development in Africa, Asia and Latin America have all gained considerable importance, both in implementing the basic objectives of the World Disarmament Campaign and in promoting regional meetings and seminars aimed at encouraging proper dissemination of information on the objectives of general and complete disarmament.

Recent international events have demonstrated the central role now played by human beings who had been stifled for so many years by global ideologies that had attempted to force everyone into the same mould and to provide an explanation for everything. The new reality proves also that we all have the enormous responsibility of redesigning the world of the future.

Now, as we usher in the twenty-first century, we have the moral obligation to build a better world, free from the threats and fears that constituted - and unfortunately continue to constitute - the irrational machinery of control in societies calling for tolerance and broad-mindedness for a promising future. This is a unique historical opportunity; it may not necessarily last. We therefore have an obligation to make significant progress in the area of disarmament. We must seize that opportunity.

Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset, I should like sincerely to congratulate Ambassador Mroziewicz on his election to the chairmanship of this important Committee. It is particularly gratifying to see the representative of Poland, a country to which mine is linked by ties of friendship and cooperation, presiding over the First Committee, given international developments in the areas of disarmament and

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

international security. We are all confident that, given his skills and vast experience, the Committee will successfully accomplish its tasks.

I am also pleased to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election. I wish them every success in the discharge of their duties.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

If there are Member States of our international Organization that, from bitter experience, value peace and security, Kuwait undoubtedly figures prominently among them because of its most cruel experience of aggression and occupation at the hands of the Iraqi forces. Given the fact that it is the principal organ of the General Assembly entrusted with issues of disarmament and international security, this Committee is the first to know the implications for world peace and security of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the results of that aggression which were not limited to my country, Kuwait, but affected many peoples and States in and beyond our region.

The Iraqi aggression has demonstrated the absolute validity of the doctrine and principle of collective security. By the same token, the international community has been made fully aware of the fact that peace and security are increasingly dependent on the collective efforts of the international family as a whole, and that, in today's world, they are an indivisible whole. Therefore, my delegation supports all efforts that uphold the content and concept of collective security.

Recently, we have listened with interest to world leaders declare unambiguously from the General Assembly rostrum that the principled and honourable international support for the peaceful people of Kuwait in their cruel plight was a major turning-point in international relations and the role of the United Nations in deterring aggression and in the maintenance of international peace and security. The response of the international community was seen in unprecedented Security Council resolutions and an unequalled international military effort to defeat the attenpt of putting the logic of force above the logic of justice and international legality. That response came as an irrevocable step in the march towards a restoration of the original

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political aims and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the realization of the vision of the founders of the Organization and the authors of its Charter.

As His Royal Highness the Amir of the State of Kuwait pointed out in his statement before the General Assembly last month, this action will be immortalized in the annals of history as a great achievement of this Organization and will serve as a warning to anyone who may entertain thoughts of brutalizing others to realize false ambitions or to satisfy an overpowering whim that the United Nations will deter him. The experience of Kuwait has proved to the world that on the threshold of the twenty-first century it is no longer possible, after all the progress made by man, to allow the use of force in international relations and that the violation of the sovereignty and independence of any small or large country cannot be tolerated.

The terms of reference and the business of our Committee assume greater importance because of the ongoing positive changes in international relations. The question of disarmament has become a lofty and common goal of all humanity. This stems from yet another lofty goal, namely, the desire to ensure the survival of man, to ward off the spectre of extermination and save the great many resources wasted on weapons of mass destruction and channel those resources constructively to development and the welfare of people.

My delegation is delighted to witness the developments in the field of disarmament. We are also pleased by the recent achievements of the two super-Powers in the form of agreements and historic initiatives that have brought our world a long way towards the achievement of the lofty goals of disarmament.

(Mr. Abulhasan, Kuwait)

While such initiatives and agreements proceed from the desire of the civilized societies whose humanitarian tendencies have reached their pinnacle, to maintain world peace, we find that in our world today there are certain regimes that are determined to retrogress and contradict the spirit of our age, and thereby lag behind the march of civilization, in their striving to develop and stockpile every type of the devices of mass destruction. By investing in such weapons, such regimes squander the wealth and resources which their peoples need desperately for their development, well-being and prosperity.

Just as the Iraqi regime, by its act of aggression and its occupation of my peaceful country, has demonstrated that the security of every State in today's interdependent world is an integral and indivisible whole, it has demonstrated also that it is in the interest of the international community, its common destiny and the survival of its future generations, that that community should take a single, unified and firm stand against any regime that tries to impede this historic impetus towards disarmament and thereby turns back the clock. Such regimes, deceit and trickery, try to build arsenals of mass destruction in defiance of the international will and resolutions emanatng from international legality. The interests of humanity and the common destiny of man require that this international stand should be much more determined and firm when we find ourselves faced with regimes that would not hesitate to use such weapons of mass destruction, without a qualm, against peaceful countries, with no other justification but the desire of expansion, domination and influence.

Kuwait, given its national responsibilities, will take all necessary measures to protect its security and stability and prevent the repetition of its recent bitter experience. Such measures will also be taken in

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coordination with the States of the Gulf Cooperation Council and certain other neighbouring and friendly countries.

The recent developments in the Gulf have demonstrated beyond a doubt that the call to declare the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone is an inevitable must that is of the highest priority in the context of the new world order, which started with the end of the cold war.

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The emergence of that new world order was strengthened by the positive stand of the international community on the side of Kuwaiti right. This was further strengthened by the post-Kuwait liberation measures and resolutions and the efforts of the major Powers in the direction of their nuclear disarmament which have broadened the scope of détente and fostered a new spirit of cooperation. All this has had positive effects in the areas of international relations, the resolution of regional conflicts, and on the way States regard the new role of the United Nations.

When we talk of declaring the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone, we do not limit ourselves to Iraq. All the countries of the region must be part of the zone, especially Israel which, as the international community is well aware, possesses a nuclear arsenal that has a destabilizing effect on the region and compels other countries in the region to attempt to match its capabilities. The international community is well aware also that Israel refuses to accede to the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty so that it can use its nuclear weapons to threaten the countries of the region. Today's events, like those of the past, prove that no nuclear arsenal, irrespective of its destructive power, can guarantee peace or stability for any people; it can only force other States into a fearsome arms race that escalates tension, depletes energy and resources, and prolongs conflicts.

While we urge that the huge momentum created by the positive developments in the arena of international relations should be taken advantage of in declaring the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone, I cannot but welcome the historic initiative of the President of the United States, Mr. George Bush, to make drastic reductions in his country's nuclear arsenal. I also welcome the positive response of President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union. Those two

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leaders have proved that the march of détente and progress towards a new world order has gained new momentum and has become irreversible.

That is the spirit we hope will prevail in our region, and lead it to the safe haven of peace, security and stability.

Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania): It is a great pleasure and a privilege for me most warmly to congratulate Ambassador Mroziewicz on his election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I am sure that, under his dynamic and able leadership, the prospects for a successful session are good. We assure the Chairman of our full support and cooperation. The good wishes and congratulations of my delegation go also to the other officers of the Committee.

The First Committee is meeting at an important time for international peace and security. In the last two years we have experienced dramatic changes and developments in the international arena. We have entered a crucial era of transition as we search for a new world order. Notions directly or indirectly connected to the language of the cold war are well behind us. With the spectacular crumbling of East-West confrontation, the way has been opened for new, creative security structures. In the wake of the Gulf war, the role of the United Nations in international peace and security matters is much more consistent with the wonderful provisions of the Charter. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Romania offered its own contribution to that very important undertaking, which will have a particular impact on the international security climate. We fully share the opinion that no effort should be spared to build upon the momentum which has now been generated. In this context, arms control and disarmament should also be viewed from a new perspective.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

In Europe, we are witnessing fundamental changes with emerging qualitative changes in security relations. The Paris summit meeting in November last year and the Charter for a New Europe signed on that occasion should be viewed as a milestone on the road towards a new identity for our continent, opening up unprecedented prospects for security and cooperation.

Addressing the situation in Europe today, one cannot ignore the legitimate concerns of Eastern European countries with respect to their security. In a period when we are working intensively for the building up of an all-European cultural area, establishing a common human dimension and expanding economic integration, the necessity of creating a new security system also arises. During his official visit to Bucharest, the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Mr. Manfred Wörner, expressed the opinion that Romania's security concerns, like the security concerns of other Eastern countries, must be taken into consideration in any new arrangements in Europe. Under the prevailing circumstances, like other States in the area, Romania is turning to NATO with many of its expectations in the field of national security and regional stability, because that alliance, which is proving its capacity to adapt to the new realities of the continent, plays a major role in the Europe of today and will play an important role in the Europe of tomorrow. We entirely share the conviction expressed by NATO member States that "their own security is inseparably linked to that of all other States in Europe". We value all the more the common decision of NATO member States to "give expression to their commitment to an evolving security partnership".

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

As for achieving greater stability and security at a lower level of armaments, the conclusion of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, as well as the new set of confidence- and security-building measures agreed upon in the Viena Document are very important steps towards this goal.

The ongoing negotiations on military manpower levels in Europe, along with the negotiations on additional confidence- and security-building measures, offer further opportunities for strengthening stability and security on our continent. We share the opinion expressed here by the Netherlands delegation in the name of the 12 members of the European Community that the further developement of a security dialogue and of arms control measures will be embedded in the wider framework of the process of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In this respect, Romania is actively participating in the consultations aimed at establishing new negotiations in 1992, after the conclusion of the Helsinki follow-up meeting. Along with other European countries, we welcome the encouraging outcome of the recent exploratory round on an open skies agreement as an important step towards military transparency and confidence-building measures. The bilateral agreement between Romania and Hungary on an open skies regime signed last May in Bucharest is a pioneering step in this regard.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

Unfortunately, we cannot say that there are no obstacles in the way of promoting a new and effective system of regional security, stability and peace throughout Europe. A case in point is the conflict in Yugoslavia. We welcome and support the efforts of the European Economic Community (EEC) to encourage a political settlement of the Yugoslav crisis. Romania was actively involved in, and contributed to, the negotiations and adoption of the Security Council resolution on this matter. As neighbours, we are of the opinion that countries bordering Yugoslavia have a great responsibility to facilitate a solution at the negotiating table. Romania strictly implements the general and complete embargo on any deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Yugoslavia, called for in Security Council resolution 713 (1991).

The year 1991 will be considered very important in the field of arms control and disarmament. The whole world and primarily the European nations received with great satisfaction the news of the destruction of the last United States and Soviet land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles in accordance with the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty). The conclusion of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the United States and the Soviet Union is fundamental to the nuclear arms control and verification process. In particular it leads to increasing stability through substantial reductions of the most destabilizing strategic offensive weapons, namely ballistic missiles. The START Treaty also provides the basis for further steps and measures for nuclear arms control. We welcome with satisfaction the statement made in this Committee by Mr. Ronald F.Lehman II, Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, to the effect that the United States has every intention of ratifying the START Treaty and trusts that the Soviet Union will do the same.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

The unilateral initiatives on nuclear arms recently announced by President Bush, and reciprocated by President Gorbachev, are highly important steps towards lower levels of armaments and greater security. It is very encouraging that the two leading nuclear Powers are thus demonstrating their special responsibility and commitment. We consider these decisions a great contribution to efforts aimed at further strengthening stability and international security in the nuclear era. From the perspective of a European country, the particular significance of these new measures and proposals is that, for the first time, they concern the class of short-range nuclear missiles deployed in large numbers in Europe. The elimination of all ground-launched theatre nuclear weapons, the removal of all tactical nuclear weapons from surface ships, attack submarines and bases for land-based naval aircraft, and the destruction of many of these weapons constitute a particularly constructive and positive response to the new realities prevailing in Europe and promote the stability and security of the international community as a whole. We consider the decisions of the United States and the Soviet Union to remove strategic bombers from alert status and to return their weapons to storage areas as an important move in further improving the international climate and, primarily, in reducing the risks of a nuclear strike by error or accident. The cessation of certain programmes for the development of some types of nuclear weapons and the freezing of the existing levels of other similar weapons, announced by the United States and by the Soviet Union, may be considered as part of the normal trend now prevailing and reflecting the new realities in bilateral as well as international relations.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

We welcome the decision of the two nuclear Powers to adopt immediate unilateral measures without waiting for negotiations to establish a legal bilateral framework. We are confident that, once implemented, such measures will become an irreversible international trend. In the same positive spirit, we particularly appreciate the measures announced concerning nuclear-weapons reductions and the proposals aimed at opening intensive negotiations for the further limitation of the nuclear arsenals of the two nuclear Powers.

President Bush's initiative, the positive response of President Gorbachev, the recent proposals of President Mitterrand, as well as the positive reactions of appreciation and support coming from capitals all over the world indicate that we are on the threshold of a process conducive to the dismantling of the basic mechanisms of nuclear armaments.

Committed as it is to the aim of complete cessation of nuclear tests for obvious practical reasons, my country favours the principle of gradually reaching that objective. In keeping with such a realistic and flexible approach, Romania welcomes the entry into force of the protocols to the threshold test-ban Treaty and to the Treaty on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, signed by the United States and the Soviet Union in June 1990. In this context, we take note of a clear trend towards limiting nuclear testing by decreasing the number of actual explosions.

Romania favours the re-establishment at the 1992 session of the Conference of Disarmament of the Ad Hoc Committee to continue consideration of a nuclear test-ban initiated at this year's session of the Conference. We

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

look forward to increasing our contribution to the substantive work of the Ad Hoc Committee, as well as of the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts to Consider International Cooperative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events.

Since the beginning of 1990 Romania has been fully committed to, and has actively participated in, the current multilateral efforts to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime. In keeping with its non-proliferation commitements, Romania has a firm policy of, and has recently adopted, special regulations on exports control regarding all items related to the production of weapons. This year my country has been accepted for membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group. In the same spirit, Romania has decided to accept the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and to accede to this Group. We have close relations with the members of the Australian Group working to increase the effectiveness of its control on chemical and biological materials.

Romania considers the NPT as a cornerstone of the international regime of nuclear non-proliferation. We welcome the accession to the NPT of Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The intention of France and China to become parties to the NPT are of particular importance. By this action, all permanent members of the Security Council will have acceded to the Treaty which is one of the pillars of a stable international system of peace and security. An efficient non-proliferation regime requires appropriate measures to prevent access to nuclear materials, equipment and technology for other than peaceful purposes. My country is fulfilling in good

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

faith all the obligations it assumed under the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) system of safeguards, as well as other recognized international arrangements in the field of nuclear transfers which are an integral part of the non-proliferation regime.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

Since the Gulf War, there has been a growing concern on the part of the international community over chemical weapons and their possible use and proliferation. We consider that the earliest possible conclusion of a convention on the complete and effective prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction has become a matter of utmost importance and urgency. Romania participates in the process of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the draft convention on chemical weapons and, like other countries, has taken a number of constructive steps to increase confidence and promote the conclusion of such a convention. My country, which is unequivocally committed to the achievement of a total and comprehensive ban of chemical weapons, has repeatedly declared during the last two years that it possesses no chemical weapons and has no means of producing them or any intention of acquiring them. Romania intends to become an original party to the chemical-weapons convention. I am pleased to announce that with respect to chemical weapons, and more specifically to the 1925 Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, the Romanian Parliament this year adopted a law on the withdrawal of the reservations made to this Protocol a long time ago. For our part, we consider that, after the statement of 13 May by President Bush and the progress made in the negotiations, there are fair reasons to hope that the chemical weapons convention will be concluded during the course of 1992.

With respect to the Third Review Conference of the biological weapons Convention, the agreement reached on improving and supplementing confidence-building measures, as well as on convening a meeting of experts on verification, may be regarded as major achievements. On that occasion, Romania presented a working document on measures at the national level to

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

promote the objectives of non-proliferation by transparency and control, as well as some proposals for strengthening the Convention regime.

Romania attaches great importance to regional arms control and disarmament measures. It is normal that initiatives and action in this field should be taken mainly by the countries concerned in accordance with the specific characteristics of each region. It would be useful for some general principles to be drawn from the positive experience gathered so far. The conclusion of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document on a new set of confidence- and security-building measures, adopted in the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), deserve to be mentioned in this context. It appears that regional arms control and disarmament measures should address first of all the most destabilizing military capabilities; should result in a stable military balance at the lowest possible levels, offering equal and undiminished security for all and being reinforced by adequate verification; and should not lead to increased arms transfers to other regions.

This leads me to the issue of international arms transfers. My delegation welcomes the Study (A/46/301) on Ways and Means of Promoting Transparency in the International Transfers of Conventional Arms, prepared by a group of governmental experts. One of the concrete proposals put forward in this document concerns the establishment of a universal and non-discriminatory arms-transfer register under the auspices of the United Nations. As Ambassador Donowaki of Japan stressed here in his important statement on this subject, a United Nations arms-transfer register is meant only for greater transparency as a first step in confidence building. Due note should be taken of the importance of exercising careful restraints in arms transfers and of

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

the necessity to promote disarmament in all its aspects. The Romanian delegation is ready to support and sponsor a concrete initiative in this field emerging from the consultations between the Twelve, Japan and other interested countries and to offer its own contribution in order for the draft resolution to receive the overwhelming agreement of the members of the Committee.

Transparency in international arms transfers is just one aspect in the larger context of the promotion of openness and objective information on military matters in general. Annual reporting of military budgets and wider participation in this exercise could offer additional elements for strengthening mutual confidence. We welcome and support the growing attention paid by the Disarmament Commission to the subject of objective information on military matters. We also note with satisfaction the increasing role of the United Nations disarmament machinery in promoting in-depth and new approaches especially in the field of verification. We express our appreciation for the dynamic efforts and contributions of the Department for Disarmament Affairs in the field of multilateral dimensions of arms control and disarmament.

As a member State of the Conference on Disarmament, Romania is particularly interested in the further improvement of the functioning of this multilateral negotiating body dealing with the control of armaments and disarmament. We welcome the increase in the number of States participating in the work of the Conference. Although those States do not enjoy the status of full members, many of them are making very significant contributions. A vivid example in this respect is the unprecedentedly large participation of observers in the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. Efforts to ensure further improvement of the work of the Geneva Conference should to be made in order to increase its efficiency and purpose-oriented activity.

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

With respect to the First Committee of the General Assembly, we endorse particularly the ideas and proposals aimed at the rationalization of its procedures and the streamlining of its agenda. The real problems of today, approached in a more realistic manner, must prevail in our deliberations and negotiations and in the outcome of our work. It is now increasingly recognized that neither the degree of confrontation nor the number of resolutions adopted is a real criterion of our activity and the results thereof. We are here first of all to set priorities for an active and constructive search for meaningful consensus on practical solutions and guidelines for multilateral efforts in the field of arms control and disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.